

relationships of *Gypobierax* and thus its most suitable vernacular name. We would emphasize the sociability of *Gypobierax* and its lack of intraspecific aggression in areas where an abundant supply of Oil Palm nuts brings them together. This allows them to assemble and maintain very dense populations. When not hunting they sit quietly in small groups and likewise assemble in groups of a dozen or so to roost in Baobabs with Hooded Vultures. We have already discussed their catholic feeding habits and possible competition with both African Fish Eagles and kites. We have drawn attention to the variability of behaviour in calling and roosting, nest sites and egg colour. It is undoubtedly the most curious raptor in the whole Ethiopian region.

*Acknowledgements:* We are obliged to Peter Steyn for making his file on this species available to R. K. B. for study and use and to Messrs. C. W. Benson, B. G. Donnelly and M. P. S. Irwin for criticizing a draft of this paper and in the case of the latter two gentlemen for showing us drafts of their own work on *Gypobierax*.

#### References:

- Austen, W. M. 1953. Palm-nut Vultures *Gypobierax angolensis* in Raphia Palms at Mtunzini, Zululand. *Ostrich* 24: 98-102.
- Basilio, A. 1963. *Aves de la Isla Fernando Poo*. Madrid: Cocusula.
- Belcher, C. F. 1930. *The birds of Nyasaland*. London: Technical Press.
- Brooke, R. K., Cannell, I. C. & Jeffery, R. D. 1971. New distributional records of raptors in western Angola. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 91: 165-167.
- Brown, L. H. 1970. *African birds of prey*. London: Collins.
- Brown, L. H. & Amadon, D. 1968. *Eagles, hawks and falcons of the world*, vol. 1. London: Country Life Books.
- Cannell, I. C. 1968. Notes from Angola. *Ostrich* 39: 264-265.
- Cawkell, E. M. & Moreau, R. E. 1963. Notes on birds in the Gambia. *Ibis* 105: 156-178.
- Chapin, J. P. 1932. The birds of the Belgian Congo 1. *Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.* 65.
- Donnelly, B. G. & Irwin, M. P. S. 1972. On the food of the Palmnut Vulture *Gypobierax angolensis*. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 92: 22
- Erard, C. & Etchécopar, R. D. 1970. Some notes on the birds of Angola. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 90: 158-161.
- Hartley, C. W. S. 1967. *The Oil Palm*. London: Longmans.
- Hutson, H. P. W. & Bannerman, D. A. 1930. The birds of northern Nigeria. *Ibis* (12) 6: 600-638.
- Lowe, W. P. 1937. Report on the Lowe-Waldron expeditions to Ashanti forests and northern territories of the Gold Coast (part). *Ibis* (14) 1: 345-368.
- Moreau, R. E. 1943. A contribution to the ornithology of the east side of Lake Tanganyika. *Ibis* 85: 377-412.
- North, M. E. W. 1944. Some east African birds of prey. *Ibis* 86: 117-138.
- Pakenham, R. H. W. 1939. Field notes on the birds of Zanzibar and Pemba. *Ibis* (14) 3: 522-554.
- 1943. Field notes on the birds of Zanzibar and Pemba. *Ibis* 85: 165-189.
- Pinto, A. A. da R. 1966. Notas sobre as coleccoes ornitologicas recolhidas em Angola nas expedicoes efectuadas pelo Instituto de Investigacao Cientifica de Angola da 1959 a 1961. *Bol. Inst. Invest. Cient. Ang.* 3: 149-236.
- Slater, W. L. & Moreau, R. E. 1932. Taxonomic and field notes on some birds of north-eastern Tanganyika Territory. *Ibis* (13) 2: 487-522.
- Serle, W. 1939. Field observations on some northern Nigerian birds. *Ibis* (14) 3: 654-699.
- 1954. A second contribution to the ornithology of the British Cameroons. *Ibis* 96: 47-80.
- Thomson, A. L. & Moreau, R. E. 1957. Feeding habits of the Palmnut Vulture *Gypobierax*. *Ibis* 99: 608-613.
- Traylor, M. A. 1963. Check-list of Angolan birds. *Publ. Cult. Comp. Diam. Ang.* 61.
- Verheyen, R. 1953. *Exploration du Parc National de l'Upemba 19. Oiseaux*. Brussels: Inst. Parcs Nat. Congo Belge.
- Walker, G. R. 1939. Notes on the birds of Sierra Leone. *Ibis* (14) 3: 401-450.
- Young, C. G. 1946. Notes on some birds of the Cameroon Mountain District. *Ibis* 88: 348-382.

## The food of *Gypobierax angolensis*

by B. G. Donnelly & Michael P. Stuart Irwin

Received 5th November 1971

Further to that part of the contribution above by Brooke & Jeffery on the food of *Gypobierax angolensis* the following observations are of immediate interest.

On 24 May 1967, an immature specimen of this species was brought into the Port Elizabeth Museum from "Happy Valley", Humewood, Port Elizabeth in the Republic of South Africa, which incidentally constitutes the most southerly existing record in Africa as will be discussed elsewhere (Donnelly & Irwin in prep.). The bird was haemorrhaging slightly from the mouth and later died, though the actual cause of death could not be ascertained. The stomach contents revealed one freshwater crab *Potamonestes pentatus* (wet weight 10 g) and about two handfuls of seed (wet weight 50 g) from the introduced Australian Wattle-tree *Acacia cyclops*, which grows in profusion on the nearby sand dunes. Middlemiss (1963: 419-420) lists twenty-one bird species which are known to utilize the seeds of *A. cyclops*. Of these, the ten larger species, as was found in *Gypobierax*, ingest the entire seed and aril-like funicle.

Also, in the Albany Museum, Grahamstown, there is a specimen, obtained on the Fish River, near Cradock, on 8 May 1937, the contents of whose stomach are given as one bone (large), feathers and hair.

The versatility of feeding techniques and the broad spectrum of the food niche as given by Brooke & Jeffery for *Gypobierax* is again stressed.

### References:

- Donnelly, B. G. and Irwin, M. P. S. (in prep.) The distribution of the Palm-nut Vulture *Gypobierax angolensis* in eastern and southern Africa.  
Middlemiss, E. 1963. The distribution of *Acacia cyclops* in the Cape Peninsula area by birds and other animals. *S. Afr. Journ. Sci.* 59 (9): 419-420.

## The type locality of *Agapornis nigrigenis*

by R. J. Dowsett

Received 12th October 1971

The lovebird *Agapornis nigrigenis* (usually considered a race of *A. lilianae*) was described by W. L. Sclater in 1906 (*Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 16: 61). The type locality was given as Muguazi River, N.W. Rhodesia and was stated to be some 15 miles from the confluence of this river with the Zambesi. The spelling Muguazi is followed in most recent standard works, including Benson *et al.* (1971, *Birds of Zambia*), although White (1965, *Revised check list of African non-passerine birds*) does spell it Muguzi, presumably in error.

But no river of this name is known from what is now the Southern Province of Zambia. The type specimen was collected in September 1904 by Dr. A. H. B. Kirkman but it has not been possible to trace Kirkman's travels. Numerous contemporary maps and other documents have been examined in the National Archives of Zambia without success. Neither do local inhabitants have any knowledge of the Muguazi River.

On the other hand there is a river called the Ngwezi within the limited range of *nigrigenis* and it seems that this must be where the type was collected. Furthermore Sclater, in his original description, mentions that Kirkman found *nigrigenis* fairly common on the Majelie River, some twenty miles from

the Muguazi and like that river also a northern tributary of the Zambesi. This is presumably the Machili River, which is about fifteen miles north-west of the Ngwezi.

The type specimen is now in the South Africa Museum at Cape Town. Professor J. M. Winterbottom (*in litt.* to C. W. Benson) states that the specimen has two labels, both in Sclater's handwriting, with one reading "N. W. Rhodesia" and the other "Mugwazi River, N. W. Rhodesia". The writing is perfectly clear and cannot be a misreading of Ngwezi. But it seems certain that either Sclater misread the collector's writing or Kirkman himself misheard "Ngwezi" as "Muguazi". I think it reasonable to suggest that the type locality as originally recorded is in error and that it should be:—

*Ngwezi River, 15 miles north of its confluence with the Zambesi, Kalomo District, Zambia, at about 17° 30' S., 25° 10' E.*

Although a detailed locality is lacking from the label of the type specimen one is justified by the precise one in Sclater's original description.

*A. nigrigenis* is common in mopane woodland along parts of the Ngwezi River including the type locality. Indeed six of the sixty specimens in the collection of the National Museums of Zambia at Livingstone are from this immediate area and are probably topotypical. The overall range of *nigrigenis* is from Livingstone west to the Machili River and north to the extreme south of the Kafue National Park, an area considerably less than 100 km from east to west and 200 km from north to south. Along the south bank of the Zambesi in Rhodesia *nigrigenis* is sparse and irregular (G. R. Thomson *in litt.*), although Brooke (1967, *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 87: 121) does give a breeding record from this area. Smithers (1964, *Check list of birds of Bechuanaland Protectorate*) records it from as far west as Katima Mulilo in the Caprivi Strip, but this is Leppan's record which Benson & Irwin (1967, *Zambia Museum Papers* 1: 42) consider may be erroneous. It is unrecorded and perhaps absent from west of the Machili River in the Western (formerly Barotse) Province of Zambia.

*Acknowledgements:* I am most grateful to C. W. Benson, R. K. Brooke, M. P. Stuart Irwin and Professor J. M. Winterbottom for advice, and to the staff of the National Archives of Zambia for research facilities.

## A further southern African report of the American Pectoral Sandpiper

by A. C. Kemp

Received 27th November 1971

Ginn & Brooke (*Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.*, 1971: 125–126) have reviewed African records of the American Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*, and have discussed in detail a specimen collected in northern Botswana on 25th April 1971. They also mention another southern African specimen, from Rondevlei, Cape Town. A third is represented by a female in the Transvaal Museum, collected by O. P. M. Prozesky at Rooiwal Power Station, 15 km north of Pretoria, Transvaal, on 1st December 1969. Thanks to M. P. Stuart Irwin, I have been able to compare it with the Botswana specimen and the one mentioned in an editorial foot-note to Ginn & Brooke, both in the National Museum, Bulawayo. It is in winter plumage, and measures as follows:— wing 125, culmen (exposed) 27, tail 58, tarsus 29, middle toe without claw 21 mm. It weighed 47.4 g.



# New records from northern Cameroun

by C. de Greling

Received 6th November 1971

## INTRODUCTION

I lived in northern Cameroun from November 1965 to July 1967, mainly in the Waza National Park, but I also travelled extensively in northern Cameroun between 8° N. and 12° N. This part of the country belongs to the Soudanian savanna zone, with some Sahelian savanna mostly north of 12 N.

Little collecting has been done in this area, but some records can be found in Bannerman (1936-51), Good (1952-53), Malbrant & Maclatchy (1949), and Dragesco (1961), who collected in the Waza National Park; and see also Bates (1930).

The notes which follow are confined to species little known in northern Cameroun, most of them actually not previously recorded at all. Most of my specimens were collected in the Waza National Park, and are now in part at the Ecole pour la formation de spécialiste de la faune at Garoua, and in part at the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle in Paris. They were identified with the help of M. Francis Roux. For nomenclature I have normally followed White (1961-65).

## SYSTEMATIC LIST

*Egretta gularis*: Previously unrecorded in northern Cameroun, a Reef Heron was seen on 23rd March 1966 at Zizuague. It had the chin and throat white and the bill brown, characters which separate it from the dark phase of *Egretta garzetta*; see Etchécopar & Hüe (1964), whose nomenclature moreover I follow in this particular case rather than that of White (1965).

*Aythya nyroca*: Previously unrecorded in northern Cameroun, a White-eyed Pochard was seen on a water hole in the "yaere" (flat and treeless savanna inundated during the rainy season) in the Waza National Park on 3rd March 1966.

*Circus gallicus*: Short-toed Eagles (singles) were seen in December 1966 and on 27th March 1967 at Waza. Previously known from Zaria in Nigeria and Dan Kaba in northern Hausaland (Bannerman 1930), also from Darfur as a common winter visitor (Lynes, *Ibis*, 1925: 459).

*Elanus riocourii*: A flock of about 200 Swallow-tailed Kites seen in the Waza National Park on 14th April 1966, and single birds seen at Waza on 4th February and 18th April 1967, are the first records from northern Cameroun.

*Coturnix delegouei*: A male Harlequin Quail was collected at Maroua on 12th September 1966, and is the first record from northern Cameroun.

*Vanellus superciliosus*: A Brown-chested Wattled Plover was seen at Maroua on 27th July 1967, and seems to be the first record from northern Cameroun.

*Limosa limosa*: Single Black-tailed Godwits were seen at Waza on 28th March and 25th April 1966, and 10th April and 10th June 1967 (also a flock of ten on 1st July 1967); and at Maroua on 15th September 1967.

*Rostratula benghalensis*: Painted Snipe were recorded at Waza on 5th May 1966, and at Maroua, where it breeds (a nest with four chicks not more than a few days old was found on 13th September 1967).

*Sterna leucoptera*: White-winged Black Terns occurred in small numbers each year in January in the "yaere" between Waza and Fort Foureau. This species was already known from Lake Chad and the lower Chari River, but had not previously been recorded from northern Cameroun.

*Turnix hottentota*: To the few records of the Hottentot Buttonquail (race *T. b. nana*) from West Africa can be added one collected at Rhumsiki in the Mandara mountains on 9th October 1966.

